

by Bob Saydlowski, Jr.



# Sonor Performer Plus

Sonor currently has five different drum lines, ranging from the costly *Signature Series* to the lower-end *Panther Series*. The *Performer Plus* is a step above the *Panther* and regular *Performer* lines. Components of the PPK-225 *Performer Plus* kit are: 16x22 bass drum (9-ply beech), 10x12 and 11x13 tom-toms (6-ply beech), 16x16 floor tom (6-ply beech), and 6V2X14 steel-shell snare drum. The bass drum and toms feature a lacquer finish.

## Bass Drum

The 16x22 bass drum has 20 lugs with large T-handle rods. The two rods at the bottom of the batter side are slotted key rods, which makes for easier pedal mounting. Sonor did not fit them onto the audience side's bottom (and I wonder why). The drum has channeled chrome metal hoops. A rubber strip is inserted into the batter side hoop for flush pedal mounting. Two felt damper strips are included, and there is a single venthole at the bottom of the shell.

Sonor's spurs are bent into a curved triangle and fitted into prism blocks. The spurs move freely for angle setting and are then locked in position by a T-screw. Drum height can be set, depending upon the radius at which you set the spurs. Each spur has a convertible rubber/spike tip, and the curvature of the spurs allows for fold-away packing. (Nothing passes through the shell.) The spurs really stabilize the drum; there is no creeping whatsoever.

The drum is fitted with a transparent batter and an *Ebony* front head (with a white Sonor logo). It has good depth and

punch, but personally, I'd cut a hole in the front head to disperse some of that air more quickly.

## Mounting System

The Z5513b double tom holder is the same model as is used on Sonor's other kits. A massive, chromed square block is mounted on the bass drum. An extremely long down post passes through the block and into the drum. It is fixed in place by an angled T-screw, which closes a piece of spring steel in on the tube. The post tube has a finely ribbed surface and a memory ring. The ring fits flush into a slot on the base block, assuring no slippage or twisting.

Atop the post tube is a large triangular prism clamp, with holes for each tom-tom arm. Faucet-type levers operate the separate prisms to adjust arm height and spread. They work just beautifully and arrest any unwanted movement.

The arms themselves are capped and use ratchet angle adjustments. They, too, have memory lock rings that mate with slotted guides on the tom-tom brackets. Again, an indirect T-screw is utilized on the bracket to hold the drum. All in all, Sonor's holder is faultless. It seems to be quite strong and is very stable at all points.

## Tom-Toms

The 10x12 and 11x13 toms have 12 lugs each; the 16x16 floor tom has 16 lugs and three legs. All use Sonor's slotted key rods and have external clip-on dampers. Sonor's dampers use spring steel clips to fit onto the batter hoop and have round felt pads. (The floor tom's is larger than the

others.) A wing screw adjusts the degree of pad pressure on the batter head. I've discussed the benefits of external dampers before, and I still say it's the best way to muffle your drums if you have to.

Prism clamps are used to hold the floor tom's legs firmly in position. The drums are all fitted with transparent *Ambassadors*, top and bottom. I found that the toms all had a round, warm tone with good depth and volume.

## Snare Drum

A 6 1/2x14 ferro-manganese steel-shell snare drum comes with the *Performer Plus* kit. It has eight double-ended lugs, a center strengthening bead, 24-strand wire snares (attached with cord), and a side-throw strainer with fine-tune knob. Once again, an external muffler is supplied.

Simplicity is what makes this drum work well. Factory-fitted with a coated *Ambassador*, it has a crisp, powerful sound though it can be sensitive when needed. No problems with choking up, even when played at a loud volume.

## Hardware

The Z5365 bass drum pedal has a hinged-heel footboard, a single, tensionable expansion spring, and a hard felt beater. A black fibre strap wraps around a large round axle hub for pedal linkage. This hub has several holes in it, enabling you to relocate where the strap connects, thus changing footboard angle. Beater angle can be independently set via a threaded collar on the axle. Loosening the collar enables the beater housing to ratchet-set itself against the serrated side

of the round axle hub a *great idea*. I wish more manufacturers would incorporate this!

The pedal clamps to the bass drum by means of a long T-screw on the left side of the pedal, which pushes down efficiently on a jaw plate. This pedal's action is smooth and streamlined with easy adjustments.

The Z5467 hi-hat has double-braced tripod legs, a hinged-heel footboard matching the bass drum pedal, steel strip linkage, and a non-adjustable internal spring. Two sprung spurs are at the base. The top rod is hexagonal, as is the hole on the cymbal clutch. This definitely keeps the cymbal from turning (but also makes it difficult to use any other brand of clutch). One great feature on this stand is Sonor's unique bottom cymbal cup. Made of plastic, it's in two pieces, and is designed in such a way that, as you rotate the top piece, the angle of the bottom cymbal automatically changes and will stay there. I found this a welcome innovation and a relief from those tiny set screws. The hi-hat has firm, smooth action. One small complaint I have is with the metal bottom-cymbal sleeve, which could cause some unwanted metal-to-metal contact. A nylon sleeve would easily correct this.

Two cymbal stands are in the hardware package. The Z5262 stands have double-braced tripods, two adjustable tiers, and ratchet filters. They extend to average height and do their job fine.

The Z5567 snare stand also has a double-braced tripod base and holds the drum in a basket. A screw goes through the center (from the bottom) to close and open the basket arms. A thin, swivel sandwich clamp is used to adjust drum angle. The stand sets up low enough to accommodate the 6 1/2" deep snare easily.

### Cosmetics

The *Performer Plus* kit is available in red, black, or creme lacquer finishes (on the exterior only). The kit I saw was flawless—a lot more care goes into the application of a lacquer finish. (The regular *Performer* series has standard-size, covered shells.) Each drum has an adhesive chrome tape logo badge surrounding its venthole. An add-on tom-tom pack is available as optional equipment. It includes 9x10 and 12x14 drums, a double-tom floor stand, and a cymbal boom arm, and lists for \$650.

At \$2,275 retail, this kit may not be in the range of some casual players. But the quality and craftsmanship make the *Performer Plus* a good drumkit for many pro players and for this, the price is warranted. MD's 1986 Consumer Poll voted Sonor #1 in Quality and Craftsmanship, and this drumkit is proof of why Sonor deserved that award.



# MD BACK ISSUES

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> #17—JUNE 1980<br>Carl Palmer, Derek Pellicci, Great Jazz Drummers—Part 1.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> #66—APRIL 1985<br>Sly Dunbar, Steve Schaeffer, Chico Hamilton, Getting Your Drum Book Published.                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #18—AUGUST 1980<br>Chet McCracken & Keith Knudsen, Ed Greene.                                | <input type="checkbox"/> #67—MAY 1985<br>Alan Dawson, Steve Ferrone, David Robinson, D.J. Fontana.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #19—OCTOBER 1980<br>Louie Bellson, Mick Fleetwood, Roy Haynes.                               | <input type="checkbox"/> #68—JUNE 1985<br>Steve Jordan, Drum Equipment: A New Look, Mickey Curry, Jerry Allison.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #22—APRIL 1981<br>Hal Blaine, Gil Moore, P.I.T. Close-Up.                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> #69—JULY 1985<br>Rod Morgenstein, Kenny Malone, 1985 Readers Poll Winners.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #23—MAY 1981<br>Jaimoe Johnson-Butch Trucks, Roger Hawkins, Buddy Harman, Paul T. Riddle.    | <input type="checkbox"/> #70—AUGUST 1985<br>Larry Mullen, Jr., George Grantham, Inside Sonor.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #26—AUGUST 1981<br>Billy Kreuzmann, Mickey Hart, James Bradley, Jr.                          | <input type="checkbox"/> #71—SEPTEMBER 1985<br>Jeff Watts, Vinny Appice, George Brown.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #27—OCTOBER 1981<br>Shelly Manne, Tommy Aldridge.  | <input type="checkbox"/> #72—OCTOBER 1985<br>Chris Parker, Chris Slade, Drummers in Atlantic City.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #30—FEBRUARY 1982<br>Philly Joe Jones, Stix Hooper.  | <input type="checkbox"/> #73—NOVEMBER 1985<br>Bernard Purdie, Bobby Chouinard, Ed Soph.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #36—OCTOBER 1982<br>Stewart Copeland, Ed Thigpen, Drum Book Reference Guide.                 | <input type="checkbox"/> #74—DECEMBER 1985<br>Tony Thompson, Nicko McBrain, Paul Wertico.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #39—JANUARY 1983<br>Peter Erskine, Chester Thompson, Jim Gordon.                             | <input type="checkbox"/> #75—JANUARY 1986<br>MD's 10th Anniversary Issue, 1st MD Sound Supplement: Studio Drum Sounds.                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #40—FEBRUARY 1983<br>Jeff Porcaro, Clem Burke, Billy Higgins.                                | <input type="checkbox"/> #76—FEBRUARY 1986<br>Roy Haynes, A. J. Pero, Jimmie Fadden, David Calarco.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #43—MAY 1983<br>Earl Palmer, Chad Wackerman, Eli Konikoff.                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> #77—MARCH 1986<br>Jerry Marotta, Marvin Smith, Manny Elias, Buddy Williams.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #45—JULY 1983<br>Steve Gadd, Myroni Grombacher, Drumsticks.                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> #78—APRIL 1986<br>Ed Shaughnessy, Don Baldwin, Jerome Cooper, Ray McKinley, Ted McKenna.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #46—AUGUST 1983<br>Airtio, Mark Herndon, Fran Christina.                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> #79—MAY 1986<br>Craig Krampf, Terry Williams, Armand Zildjian, Alex Cooper, Bud Harner.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #48—OCTOBER 1983<br>Alex Van Halen, Phillip Wilson, Frank Beard.                             | <input type="checkbox"/> #80—JUNE 1986<br>Kenny Aronoff, Adam Nussbaum, Joe English, Doane Perry, MD Sound Supplement: Focus On Hi-Hat by Peter Erskine. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #49—NOVEMBER 1983<br>Phil Collins, Joe LaBarbera, Inside Sabian.                             | <input type="checkbox"/> #81—JULY 1986<br>Billy Cobham, Tico Torres, Jeff Hamilton, Readers Poll Results.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #50—DECEMBER 1983<br>Carl Palmer, Simon Kirke, Guide To Drum Computers.                      | <input type="checkbox"/> #82—AUGUST 1986<br>Steve Smith, Bill Gibson, Joe Franco, Terry Bozzio: Style & Analysis.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #54—APRIL 1984<br>Neil Peart, Ralph Cooper, Drummers And Singers.                            | <input type="checkbox"/> #83—SEPTEMBER 1986<br>Tommy Lee, Bun E. Carlos, Jerry Carrigan, Ben Riley.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #57—JULY 1984<br>John Bonham Tribute, Phil Ehart, Inside Simmons.                            | <input type="checkbox"/> #84—OCTOBER 1986<br>Dave Weckl, Bobby Blotzer, Debbi Peterson, Staying In Shape: Part 1.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #58—AUGUST 1984<br>Levon Helm, Thommy Price, Bob Moses, Atlantic City.                       | <input type="checkbox"/> #85—NOVEMBER 1986<br>Joe Morello, David Uosikkinen, Barriemore Barlow, Staying In Shape: Part 2.                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #61—NOVEMBER 1984<br>Russ Kunkel, Cozy Powell, Horacee Arnold, Focus On Teachers: Part 2.    | <input type="checkbox"/> #86—DECEMBER 1986<br>Simon Phillips, Dave Holland, Industry Insights with Remo Belli.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #62—DECEMBER 1984<br>Terry Bozzio, Omar Hakim, Ian Paice, Inside Calato.                     |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #63—JANUARY 1985<br>Alan White, Shelly Manne, Ollie Brown, Nick Mason.                       |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #64—FEBRUARY 1985<br>Mel Lewis, Mark Brzezicki, Mick Avory, Inside Meinl.                    |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> #65—MARCH 1985<br>Roger Taylor (Duran Duran), English Reggae, Jon Von Ohlen, Inside Premier. |  |

Check off the issues you desire above and send in the entire ad.  
All back issues are \$4.00 each (this includes postage and handling).

Total issues ordered-\_\_\_\_\_. My payment for \$\_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

Mail check or money order (no cash) in U.S. funds to:

**MODERN DRUMMER, Back Issue Service**  
870 Pompton Avenue, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_